

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 42-49 were pending in the Application prior to the present Amendment. All claims were rejected in the Office Action. Applicants amend Claims 42-47, cancel Claim 48, add new Claim 50 and respectfully request a reconsideration of the rejections. Claims 42-47 and 49-50 are pending after the present Amendment.

Applicants thank Supervisory Examiner Devon Kramer for the courtesy extended to the Applicants' attorney during the telephone interview of March 30, 2009.

Claims 42-43 and 46-47 were rejected in the Office Action under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Applicants corrected the language of Claims 42-43 and 46-47 and respectfully submit that these claims now comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

Claims 42-43 and 46-47 were rejected in the Office Action under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Leka et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,453,898).

As discussed during the interview, Applicants amended Claim 42 to recite that one of the first and second sealing surfaces includes "a concentrically stepped surface forming a plurality of annular contact lines with the other sealing surface." Support for this amendment is found in the previous Claim 48 and in Fig. 9 of the Application. As agreed during the interview, Leka neither teaches nor suggests this limitation of the amended Claim 42. Therefore, Claim 42 is allowable over Leka. Claims 43 and 46-47 depend from Claim 42. Therefore, Claims 43 and 46-47 are allowable over Leka at least for the same reasons as Claim 42 and further on their own merits.

Applicants also added Claim 50 which includes all limitations of the previous Claim 42 and further recites that the entire area of the first sealing surface is positioned adjacently to the entire area of the second sealing surface "such that the first and second sealing surfaces contact each other along at least one annular contact line without forming a contact along the entire area of either one of the sealing surfaces." In other words, as shown in Figs. 6-7, the entire surface area of the dome-shaped convex sealing surface of the pair 117 is positioned adjacently to the entire surface area of the concave conical sealing surface of the pair. Further, because the first and second sealing surfaces are non-complementary, they contact each other only along at least one annular contact line, and not along the entire area of either one of the sealing surfaces. In other words, as shown in the cross-sectional drawings, there are discrete points of contact

between the first and second sealing surfaces, these discrete points forming the annular contact line.

Contrary to the above recitation of the new Claim 50, Leka discloses a pump structure where most of the surface area of the aligning insert positioned in the valve fitting 72 is not adjacent to the inner surface of the valve fitting 72 with which the insert forms the annular contact. Therefore, the above limitations of the new Claim 50 are not disclosed or even suggested by Leka. Accordingly, new Claim 50 is allowable over Leka.

Claims 42 and 45 were also rejected in the Office Action under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bardenheuer (U.S. Patent No. 1,586,278).

As discussed during the interview, Bardenheuer does not disclose or even suggest the pair of sealing surfaces, one of which is dome-shaped and convex and the other is conical concave and non-complementary to the first sealing surface. Further, with respect to the amended Claim 42, Bardenheuer does not disclose or even suggest providing one of the sealing surfaces with a concentrically stepped surface to form a plurality of annular contact lines with the other sealing surface. Therefore, Claim 42 is allowable over Bardenheuer. Claim 45 depends from Claim 42. Therefore, Claim 45 is also allowable over Bardenheuer at least for the same reasons as Claim 42 and further on its own merits.

Claim 44 was rejected in the Office Action under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Leka et al. Claim 44 depends from Claim 42. Therefore, Claim 44 is allowable over Leka at least for the same reasons as Claim 42 and further on its own merits.

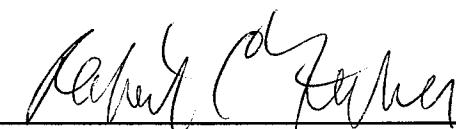
Claim 49 was rejected in the Office Action under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Leka et al in view of Yotam et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,595,495). Claim 49 depends from Claim 42. Yotam does not remedy the above deficiency of Leka. Therefore, Claim 49 is allowable over Leka in view of Yotam at least for the same reasons as Claim 42 and further on its own merits.

In view of the foregoing, favorable reconsideration of the rejections and allowance of all pending claims is respectfully requested.

THIS CORRESPONDENCE IS BEING
SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY
THROUGH THE PATENT AND
TRADEMARK OFFICE EFS FILING
SYSTEM ON April 3, 2009.

RCF:AV:dl

Respectfully submitted,



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